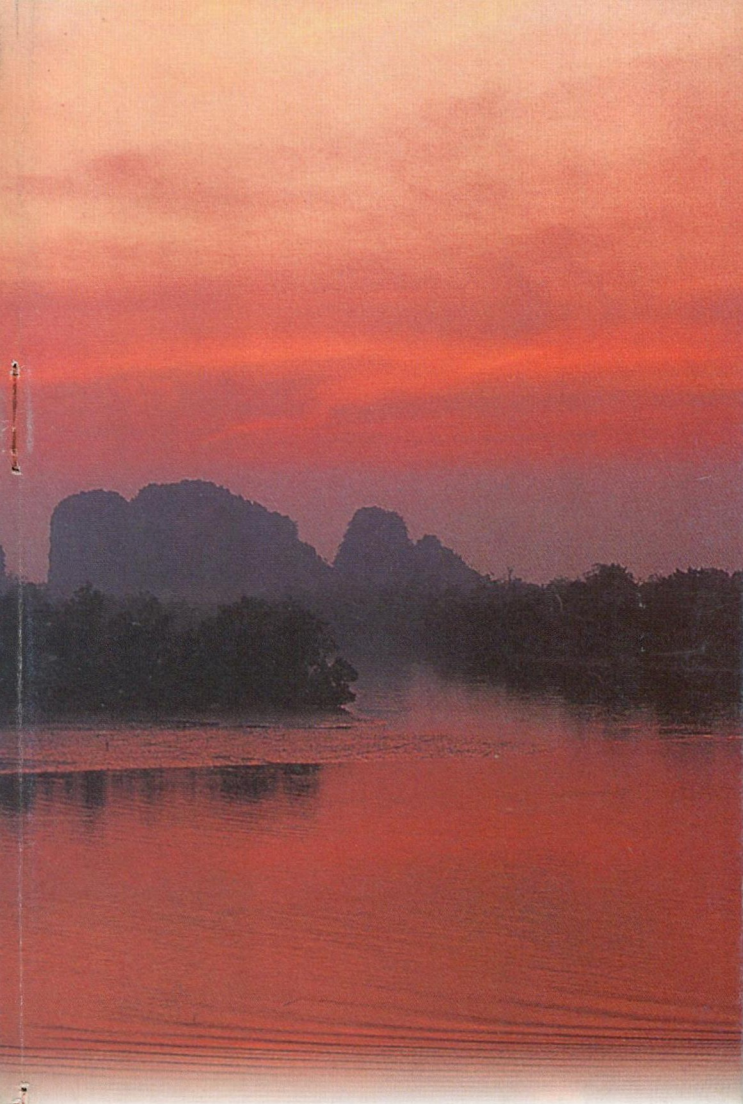

PHANG-NGA

TOURIST INFORMATION

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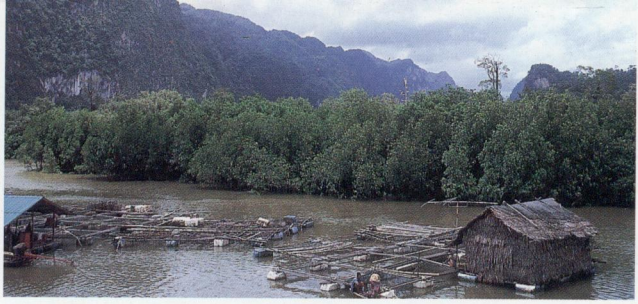


• PHANG-NGA PROVINCE •

Note : Many spellings in this brochure are at variance with posted signs and spellings in other brochures, most of which are at variance with each other. This occurs because the Thai language is still without a standard transliteration of Thai letters into Roman. If you find difficulty locating the places mentioned ask local people for directions and show them the location you want written in Thai next to each of the Romanized names in this brochure.

Thailand's main roads are lined with **kilometer stones** marked with the number of kilometers between towns. These are very useful in finding turn offs to remote locations when traveling on your own. Effort has been made in this brochure to give the reader directions as accurate as words can convey using the numbers found on the kilometer stones. If you go to the kilometer stone specified in a given listing and find no turn off, do not despair; search around, ask a few questions. In the end, you will get there.

HISTORY OF PHANG-NGA

Ancient records reveal that before establishment of the current dynasty in the late 18th Century, the area called Phang-nga was a district attached to Takuapa, the leading town thereabouts. Then with the beginning of the Rattanakosin Dynasty, during the reign of Rama I, Phang-nga was given equal status with Takuapa and another nearby town, Takuatung, and all three were removed from the government's Harbour Department and put under the Ministry of Defence.

The best evidence indicates that Phang-nga was officially established in 1809 during the reign of Rama II, when one of the periodic wars with Burma was raging. The king there, Padung Kasatri, appointed Ah Terng Woon to lead an invasion force for attack on Thailand's southern towns. The ship-borne army carried off the populations of Takuatung, and Thalang (in Phuket). Thalang was razed to the ground. An army under the direction of a royal prince was therefore sent from Bangkok to drive off the attackers.

While the war was raging some of the local people took refuge at a place then called Kra Pu-nga*(Malay for **river mounth of Pu-nga**) protected on all sides by mountains. After the razing of Thalang, it was the government's view that Thailand's hold on the area had weakened, and that a new town should be established in its stead. Thus the citizenry left in the Thalang area was instructed to move

to Kra Pu-nga and register themselves as being resident there. There is still a village in what is today Takuatung District called Thalang founded by those immigrants from Phuket. The new city was put under the administration of the government in Nakorn Sri Thammarat.

During the reign of Rama III, the central government thought to strengthen the southwest coastal town that were prey to successive Burmese attacks by appointing a governor for the province who reported directly to Bangkok. Praya Borirak Puton (Sang Na Nakorn) thereby became first governor of Phang-nga in 1840. In the same year, Takuatung was reduced in status and became merely a district of Phang-nga.

All during this period tin mining was booming, and as one of the most tin-rich of Thailand's tin bearing locales, Phang-nga attracted increasing attention from the central government because of its importance as a foreign exchange earner. When the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s struck.

Thailand, Phang-nga's status was further enhanced by incorporation of Takuapa as a district (1931).

One of Phang-nga Town's most beautiful old buildings is the Provincial Hall. The first such structure was built in Ban Chai Kai; a larger one was constructed in 1930 at Ban Tai Chang. The present structure near Poong Chang Cave was built in 1972.

*Pronunciation of Phang-nga's name is thought to have resulted from foreign tin buyers' and operators' confusion with the way it was formerly written on maps, Pu-nga--in which the old long 'oo' sound is not clearly expressed. If pronounced with a short 'oo' it is very close to present pronounciation.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Phang-nga is a primarily agricultural province in the south of Thailand. The chief cash crop is rubber, and **rubber** plantations cover a considerable area, especially noticeable along the roads. Aside from that, however, large areas are also given to food crops; considerable amounts of rice, vegetables and fruits are produced in Phang-nga.

The province has an area of 4,170 sq. kms., a large part of which is forest. Phang-nga's borders are as follows:

- To the north : lies Ranong and Surat Thani.
- To the east : lies Surat Thani and Krabi.
- To the south : lies Phuket and the Andaman Sea.
- To the west : lies the Andaman Sea.

THE POPULATION of Phang-nga was 231,649 as of December 31,1998

GOVERNMENT Phang-nga is divided into 8 districts: Muangthe district including Phang-nga Town); Kuraburi; Tapput; Kapong; Takuatung; Takuapa; Tai Meuang; and Koh Yao.

TRAVEL - By road from Bangkok, take Route 4, passing Prachuab Khirikan, Chumpon, and Ranong. Total distance is 788 kms. and travel time to Phang-nga Town is approximately 12 hours.

- By road from Phuket, use route 402, pass the parallel spans of Sarasin and Thao Thep Krasatri Bridges. You are now in Phang-nga Province. To go on to the provincial capital, go north to the town of Koke Kloy. Turn right (at Bangkok Bank), and follow Route 4 to Phang-nga Town. You will pass Takuatung along the way and cover a distance of 87 kms. Travel time is about 90 minutes.

Both air-conditioned and non air-conditioned buses leave the Southern Bus Terminal Tel : (02) 435 1195

PLACES OF INTEREST IN PHANG-NGA TOWN

Phang-nga Town is the provincial capital; it is a quiet little town with none of Phuket's hubbub but a great deal of its own charm. **Accommodations** are expanding in number but there are not a great many. In Phang-nga Town, these chiefly take the form of **budget level** hotels. Not far outside town, on Phang-nga Bay, are some resort accommodations. **Rental vehicles** should probably be secured in Phuket as, at the time of writing, there were no companies operating in Phang-nga. If you take a vehicle out of Phuket Province remember to secure **permission** from the vehicle's owner beforehand.

Kao Chang *(เขาช้าง)* :
or Elephant Mountain: This is Phang-nga's landmark. From Phang-nga Town go towards Koke Kloy, passing the Provicical Hall. On your right you will see Kao Chang, a large hill in the form of a kneeling elephant.

Phung Chang Cave *(ถ้ำพุงช้าง)* : Behind the Provincial Hall, within the grounds of Wat Pra Paht Pra Jim Temple, lies Phung Chang, or Elephant Belly Cave. Inside are stalagmites and stalactites, and water that runs year round.

Kao Ngum Cave *(ถ้ำเขางุ้ม)* : is across from the entrance to Phuhg Chang cave. Stalagmites and stalactites; in one area are seashells in great number adhering to the mountain.

Reusi Sawan and Luk Seua Caves *(ถ้ำฤาษีสวรรค์และถ้ำลูกเสือ)* : are in Somdej Pra Sri Nakarin Park on Petch Kasem Rd. diagonally opposite the Provincial Courthouse. You can walk from one cave through to the other as they are connecting caves; Reusi Sawan (Ascetic's Heaven) is the cave in front. Outside sits a figure of the monk Pra Reusi. Inside are stalagmites and stalactites, and meandering streams that trickle through the caves.

Tapan Cave Monastery *(สำนักสงฆ์ถ้ำตาปาน)* :
Inside is a bridge called the Dragon Bridge that Spans Hell. At one end of the bridge is a cave, inside of which the attractions include a waterfall, a stream, the Diamond Dharma Meditation Area, and icicle-like deposits of calcium carbonate- -stalactites and stalagmites- - shaped by nature to resemble a castle, a three–peaked chedi, a thousand-year old stone turtle, etc. The monastery is located in Muang District of Phang-nga. If travelling from Phuket, go about 600 meters past the Provincial Hall in Phang-nga Town, turn left and go on another 400 meters to the monastery.

Sah Nang Manora Park *(วนอุทยานสระนางมโนราห์)* :

The watefall and stream of Sah Nang Manora lie in Tambon Nop Pring, outside of Phang-nga Town. Follow the Phang-nga-Krabi road (Route 4) about 3 kms. Turn right at the intersection next to the Electric Station. The fall are 3 kms. down this road.

Phang-nga Wildlife Breeding Center *(สถานีเพาะเลี้ยงสัตว์ป่าจังหวัดพังงา)* : Many nearly extinct breeds are found, most notably birds, including mynahs, parrots, hawks, peacocks and pheasants. Among other animals found are mountain goats, gibbons, monkeys, langurs (long-tailed monkeys), bears, and ducks. The Breeding Farm is located on Petch Kasem Rd. in Tambon Tahk Daed--the road to Phang-nga Bay from Phuket. Open daily, 8:00 am - 6:00 pm; tel. (076) 413261.

Phang-nga Bay National Park *(อุทยานแห่งชาติอ่าวพังงา)* : was declared a national park on April 29, 1981. It lies in the districts of Phang-nga Town and Takuatung and the total area is 250,000 rai (1 rai = 1,600 sq. meters). Most visitors are intent on viewing Phang-nga Bay's bizarre landscape, which includes more than 120 singularly strange looking islands.

Travel : Take Route 4 from Phang-nga Town towards Koke Kloy and go about 8 kms. Turn left on Route 4144. The National Park Offices are about 4 kms. further on.

There are many places where boats can be rented to travel Phang-nga Bay :

◆ Ta Dan Sullakakorn (Customs Pier) : near Phang-nga Bay Resort. Boats from small to large-including ones suitable for group tours - may be rented.

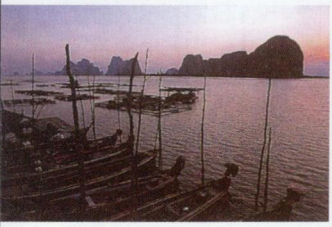
◆ Surakoon (or Ka Sohm) Pier: lies in Takuatung. Here you will find long-tail boats seating about 6 persons each.

◆ The pier in the area of the National Park has long-tails holding up to eight persons each.

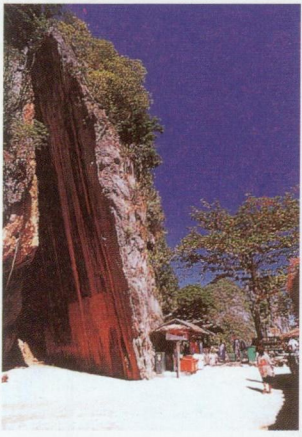
It takes about three hours to view Phang-nga Bay. The best season is from December to April, but because of the calm seas that prevail year round in this waveless body of water, trips to Phang-nga are an on-going activity. Many companies in Phuket offer sight-seeing tours, and various modes of travel are possible: from long-tail boats, to sea canoes, to Chinese junks. Virtually all of them include lunch in the price of the tour. Check with your travel agent for details.

Those wishing to explore on their own can charter a boat and check boat hire fares from signs at the piers.

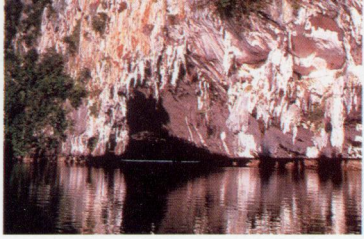
Plaecs of interest within the National Park include :



• **Panyee Island** *(เกาะปันหยี)* : This samll island has a picturesque village, which rests precariously on small pilings and extends out across the water. It is inhabited chiefly by Muslim fisher folk, whose unique culture has existed, cut off from the mainland and most modern amenities, for more than a hundred years. Souvenir shops and seafood restaurants cater to vistors.



• **Kao Ping-gan** *(เขาพิงกัน)* : The name means literally leaning mount. It is really a huge rock split in two; the smaller half has slid down and the remaining one appears now to be leaning. Though Kao Ping-gan is a very small island, one still smaller, **Kao Tapoo or James Bond Island,** is in a little bay of Kao Ping-gan where visiting boats pull up. Tapoo means nail, and this shoreless rock projects up from the sea as its name implies: flat and wide at the top, and very narrow at waterline. It is a striking sight. And the island became more famous after the James Bond adventure, The Man with the Golden Gun, was partly filmed here.



• **Tam Lod Grotto** *(ถ้ำลอด)* : This cave in Takua Thung has beautiful stalagmites and stalactites. The long tail boat can go through another side of the cave.

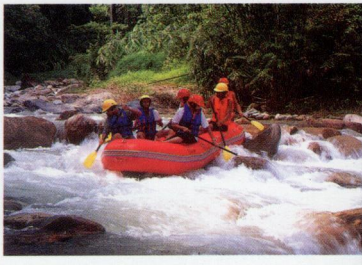
• **Hong Island** *(เกาะห้อง)* : Hong means room, and entering this hollowed out island by boat is much like floating through a giant reception hall with two doors.

• **Panak Island** *(เกาะพนัก)* : A cave with stagmites and stalactites, where a small stepped waterfall of regular descent adds to the beauty, is the island's salient feature.

• **Kao Khien** *(เขาเขียน)* : The islet of writings is what the name means. Indeed, there are ancient depictions of animals and boats which the Fine Arts Dept. has dated back no less than 3,000 years. Low on the mountain walls just above the tideline of this shore less island, they were presumably drawn by voyagers long ago who took refuge there during storms. The island lies on the way to Koh Panyee.

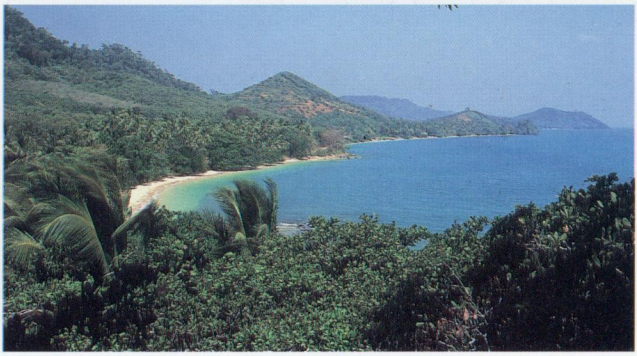
Also of interest in Phang-nga Bay National Park are the mangrove forests and swamps, cut by twisting channels, that line the mainland shores.

Tone Patiwat Wildlife Sanctuary *(เขตรักษาพันธุ์สัตว์ป่าโตนปฏิวรรต)* : Shady, forested, featuring many different tree species, with waterfall and stream, this area can be visited on elephant back or toured by canoe–a wonderful experience. Contact one of the eco-tour companies for information. To get there: take the road from Phang-nga Town about 5 kilometers toward Kapong District, turn right at Ban Song Praek and travel on another 10 kilometers.



Yao Islands *(เกาะยาว)* : consists of two large islands,Yao Noy Island and Yao Yai Island, surrounded by many smaller islands. The total area is 137.6 sq. kms. Largely unaffected by booming development in nearby Phuket, Yai Island retains it's traditional Muslim culture almost unchanged. There are a few **bungalow operations** providing basic but very charming accommodations. **Rental vehicles** are not an option, although sometimes you can strike a deal with one the pople at the bungalow to use their motorcycle. Besides, you can charter Tuk Tuk for sightseeing around the islands.

Traveling to Yao Yai Island is like traveling back in time. On Yao Yai Island there are many interesting beaches :



- **Tikood Bay** *(อ่าวตีกุด)* : is a bay with a white sandy beach. On the north is a rocky point from which can be seen a very beautiful panorama. The shore is shaded by a line of casuarina trees.

- **Klong Sohn Bay** *(อ่าวคลองสน)* : has a white sandy beach shaded by evergreens, with variously coloured sea rocks and small boulders. In this bay you can swim, look at lovely corals during low tide, or search for shellfish.

- **Sai Bay** *(อ่าวทราย)* : A beach with fine white sands and beautiful sea rocks. Good for swimming.

- **Lo Pa Raed Beach** *(โละปาแรด)* : is a beach with fine white sands shaded along its length by a coconut plantation. A rocky cape is at the north end. Swimming is safe at Lo Pa Raed anytime.

- **Larn Bay** *(อ่าวล้าน)* : is a lovely beach. Swimming is good. On the north is a headland of steep cliffs. Watch out for deep water. Travel to Ao Larn is easier by boat than overland.

- **Hin Gong Bay** *(อ่าวหินกอง)* : The beach is shaded by a forest of Mai Kiem (Cotylolobium Lanceolatum), which are long, straight trees. Rays and skates abound in the waters. Not suitable for swimming.

• **Laem Nok-ok** *(แหลมนกอก)* : A beach of many coloured rocks; good swimming anytime.

And Yao Noi Island, there are some beaches :

• **Pasai Beach** *(หาดป่าทราย)* : lies about 7 kms. from Koh Yao Noy's District Office (referred to as the ahmper). It is a white sandy beach shaded by a line of trees where swimming is safe. The islands in the distance off Krabi from a panorama in the distance.

• **Tah Kao Beach** *(หาดท่าเขา)* : is approximately 5 kms. from Koh Yai Noy's District Office. Intricately lines, colourful rocks both large and small are the attraction of this beach. Just offshore is **Koh Nok,** a tiny island that can be conveniently reached on foot at low tide. It is covered by very interesting wild plants and orchids.

Travel to Yao Islands is available from Phuket, Phang-nga and Krabi, but leaving from Phuket is most convenient.

For Yao Noy Isand, leave from Bang Rohng Pier in Tambon Pa Khlok on Phuket's northeast shore to go to Koh Yao Noy. Mail boats ferry passengers mornings on a daily basis for 50 baht per person (one way). Long-tail boats can be chartered for 600-1,200 baht each way. (depend on number of passengers) The trip takes about 1 hour.

For Yao Yai Island, leave from Tien Sin Pier at 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. It also takes about 1 hour and The fare is 50 baht per person (one way). Travel between Koh Yao Noy and Koh Yao Yai is just 20 baht. Boats leave from Koh Yao Noy's Manoh Pier and take just 15 minutes to cross the channel.

Khai Islands *(เกาะไข่)* : consist of two islands, Koh Khai Nok and Koh Khai Nai. The islands can be reached from Koh Sirey, Laem Hin Pier and Chalong Bay in Phuket by hiring a boat or contact tour operators. The island is known for the beautiful fishes rocks, corals, and secluded beaches.

PLACES OF INTEREST IN TAKUA THUNG DISTRICT

Takuatung is an old tin mining district with a history stretching back perhaps a thousand years. In former times it was a landing point for visitors from across the Indian Ocean, and the end of the line for travelers coming across the Kra Peninsula.

Some places of note :

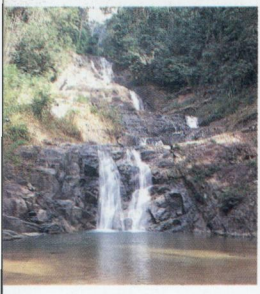
Suwan Kuha Temple *(วัดสุวรรณคูหา)* : is in Moo 2 (moo = village) of Tambon Krasohm. Starting from Phang-nga Town, go 7 kms. down the Phang-nga-Koke Kloy road (Route 4). At Km. 31 an asphalt road turns off to the right, and the temple is about 1 km. down that road.

Local people call Wat Suwan Kuha simply Wat Tam, which means cave temple. It is in a limestone mountain, or karst, riddled with caves large and small. The individual caves in the temple itself have names: ***Tam Yai or Big Cave; Tam Jaeng or Bright Cave; Tam Meud or Dark Cave;*** and ***Tam Kaew or Crystal Cave.*** The big cave is the lowest and serves as the entrance. It is much bigger than the other caves: 20 meters wide, and 40 meters long. The floor is flat and the ceiling a curving dome overhead. The cave's length is decorated in variously sized tiles of ***Lai Kram and Benjarong,*** which are trpically Thai art foms. Inside Tahm Yai, which is used as a vihara, or shrine, are stucco figures of the Buddha. The most important is a 15 meter long Reclining Buddha of great beauty.

Rahman Waterfall *(น้ำตกรามัญ)* : is 7 kms. down the same road as Wat Suwan Kuha. It is a medium sized year round waterfall surrounded by tangled forest.

Tanoon Beach *(หาดท่านุ่น)* : From Route 4 take the road leading to Phuket, Route 402, till you reach Pahk Prah, the channel separating Phuket from Phang-nga. The beach on the Phang-nga side is called Haht Tanoon. Turtles come yearly to lay their eggs. Dangerous currents in the channel.

PLACES OF INTEREST IN TAPPUT DISTRICT



Tao Tong Waterfall *(น้ำตกเต่าทอง)*: lies in Tambon Bor Saen of Tapput, about 9 kms. from the District Office in Tapput Town. To get there use the same road that leads to **Sah Nang Manora Park,** the Phang-nga Krabi Rd. (Route 4), but continue towards Krabi until you reach Moo 3 of Tambon Bor Saen. You will find a gravel road intersection where you turn, and proceed down the gravel road about 11 kms.

Rat Oupatam Temple

(Wat Bang Riang) *(วัดราษฎร์อุปถัมภ์)* : Surrounded by thickly forested hills, this temple is noted for its cool, shady environment. Inside the temple are various important Buddhist artifacts including the Phra Mahathat Chedi Buddha Dhram Banleu on the Mountain's peak. This is shaped like a bell turned upwards with a base all around. Located in Tambon Bang Riang off Petch Kasem Rd., on the stretch between Tapput and Panom, 11 km. from the Tapput District offices.

PLACES OF INTEREST IN TAI MEUANG DISTRICT

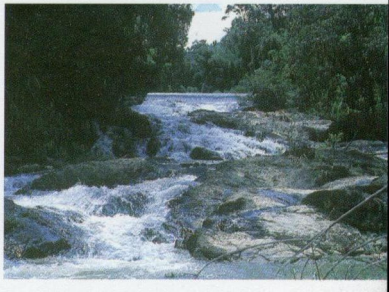
Tai Meuang is a fair sized town and varying levels of **accommo dation** are available.

Kao Lampi - Tai Meuang Beach National Park

(อุทยานแห่งชาติเขาลำปี-หาดท้ายเหมือง) : was declared a national Park on April 14, 1986 and covers a total of 45,000 rai. Tai Meuang is a phrase indicating the end of the mining district, and indeed this area was formerly, from ancient times to modern, one of the great repositories of tin in the world. Mining has ceased, and little trace remains to the untrained eye except in the name.

Sites of interest within the National Park

• **Lampi Waterfall** *(น้ำตกลำปี)* : is in Moo 6 of Tambon Tai Meuang off Petch Kasem Rd. (Route 4) near km 32-33. A gravel road intersection is there. Turn left and go about 1.5 kms. The waterfall is medium sized and divided into three levels, each about 100 meters high. It flows year round.



• **Tone Prai Waterfall** *(น้ำตกโตนไพร)* : is a large waterfall with water flowing year round. At km. 28-29 of Petch Kasem Rd. is a gravel road intersection. Turn left and go 7 kms; park your vehicle.Then continue on foot another kilometer. The hike to the falls is most enjoyable during dry season.

เกาะสุรินทร์เหนือ KOH SURIN NEUA
หมู่เกาะสุรินทร์
SURIN ISLANDS
ที่พักอุทยาน ACCOMMODATION
เกาะไข่ใหญ่
KOH KHAI YAI
เกาะสุรินทร์ใต้ KOH SURIN TAI
ไปหมู่เกาะสุรินทร์
TO SURIN ISLANDS
เกาะไข่
KOH KHAI
หินริเชลิว
RICHELIEU ROCK
เกาะระ
KOH RA
เกาะพระทอง
KOH PRATHONG
เกาะตาชัย
KOH TACHAI
เกาะคอเขา
KOH KHO KHAO
ทะเลอันดามัน ANDAMAN SEA
หาดบางสัก
BANGSAK BEACH
เกาะบอน
KOH BON
หมู่เกาะสิมิลัน
SIMILAN ISLANDS
เกาะบางู
KOH BA NGU
เกาะสิมิลัน
KOH SIMILAN
แหลมปะการัง
PAKARANG CAPE
เกาะปายู
KOH PAYU
ที่พักอุทยาน ACCOMMODATION
เกาะเมี่ยง
KOH MIANG
เกาะปาหยัน
KOH PAYAN
อุทยานแห่งชาติ เขาหลัก - ลำรู
KHAO LAK - LAMRU NATIONAL PARK
เกาะปายัง
KOH PAYANG
ท่าเรือทับละมุ TAPLAMU PIER
ไปหมู่เกาะสิมิลัน
TO SIMILAN ISLANDS
เกาะหูยง
KOH HUYONG
น้ำตกลำปี
LAMPI
WATERFALL
หาดท้ายเหมือง
THAI MUANG BEACH
อุทยานแห่งชาติเขาลำปี
KHAO LAMPI NATIONAL PARK
สนามกอล์ฟท้ายเหมือง
THAI MUANG GOLF & RESORT
แผนที่จังหวัดพังงา MAP OF PHANG-NGA
สัญลักษณ์ SYMBOLS
แหล่งท่องเที่ยว ATTRACTION
ถนน ROAD
อำเภอ DISTRICT
ท่าเรือ PIER
น้ำตก WATERFALL

จังหวัดระนอง
RANONG
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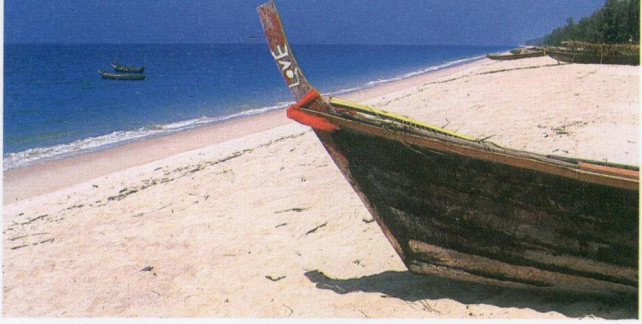
ท่าเรือคุระบุรี
KURABURI PIER
อ.คุระบุรี
KURABURI DISTRICT
จังหวัดสุราษฎร์ธานี
SURAT THANI
อุทยานแห่งชาติศรีพังงา
SRI PHANG-NGA NATIONAL PARK
4
401
4032
อ.ตะกั่วป่า
TAKUAPA DISTRICT
บ่อน้ำร้อนกะปง KAPONG HOT SPRING
อ.กะปง KAPONG DISTRICT
4090
โรงพยาบาลพังงา KAPONG HOSPITAL
4176
น้ำตกลำรู
LAMRU WATERFALL
น้ำตกหินลาด
HIN LAD WATERFALL
4138
น้ำตกสองแพรก
SONG PRAK
WATERFALL
วัดบางเหรียง
WAT BANG RIANG
อ.ท้ายเหมือง
TAP PUT DISTRICT
น้ำตกสะนางมโนราห์
SANANG MANORA WATERFALL
น้ำตกรามัญ
RAMUN WATERFALL
น้ำตกเต่าทอง
TAO THONG WATERFALL
ถ้ำสุวรรณคูหา
SUWAN KUHA CAVE
ตัวเมืองพังงา
PHANG-NGA TOWN
4044
อ.ตะกั่วทุ่ง TAKUATHUNG DISTRICT
จังหวัดกระบี่
KRABI
ท่าเรือท่าด่าน THA DAN PIER
อุทยานแห่งชาติอ่าวพังงา
PHANG-NGA BAY NATIONAL PARK
ท่าเรือสุระกุล
SURAKUL PIER
เกาะปันหยี KOH PANYI
เขาพิงกัน JAMES BOND ISLAND
อ่าวพังงา
PHANG-NGA BAY
เกาะพนัก
KOH PANAK
หาดปากหาย
PASAI BEACH
เกาะยาวน้อย
KOH YAO NOI
อ.เกาะยาว
KOH YAO DISTRICT
ท่าเรือบางโรง
BANG RONG PIER
เกาะยาวใหญ่ KOH YAO YAI



• **Tai Meuang Beach** *(หาดท้ายเหมือง)* : is a spectacular stretch of sand, 13 kms. long with clear water and an adjacent golf course, Phang-nga's first. At the Suka Peeban Tai Meuang *(สุขาภิบาลท้ายเหมือง)*, turn right and about 1.5 on the asphalt road leading to the beach. At the beach, follow the road for another 5 kilometers. The beach is clean and swimming is excellent. From November to February, sea turtles come to lay their eggs on the beach. As a result, local inhabitants customarily go view the turtles on moonlit nights.

Ban Bor Dan Hot Springs *(บ่อน้ำพุร้อนบ้านบ่อดาน)* :

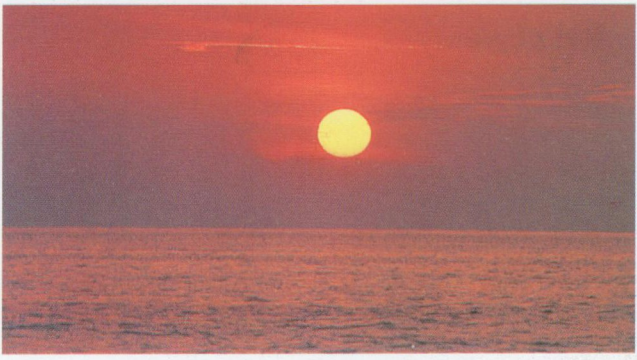
The waters here are heavy with sodium, calcium, iodine chloride and other minerals good for relief of arthritis, beriberi, mental and physical stress–they even make skin fresher and hair healthier. Open for bathing and soaking daily; the service costs just 10 baht. Located in Tambon Na Toey on the Andaman Coast: from Phuket go north through the Koke Kloy intersection in Phang-nga Province (do not turn right at the intersection) and proceed to approximately Kilometer Stone 6. Look for a road running beside Ban Bor Dan School, and proceed down it for about 3 km.

Conservation Center of the Princess Chulabhorn Undersea Park Project *(ศูนย์อนุรักษ์กลางโครงการอุทยานใต้ทะเลจุฬาภรณ์)* : created to spread knowledge of the undersea environment and its resources. The two-storey building has rooms displaying the work of the Chulaborn Research Institute's royal chairman, a meeting room, a dining room, a performance sala, and an exhibition hall. The exhibition hall has 4 rooms detailing the Chulabhorn Projects origins, the importance of undersea resources and environment, new ideas in undersea eco-tourism, and an exhibit of artworks focusing on undersea world themes. The featured exhibit of artworks focusing on undersea world themes. The featured exhibition in the large hall is entitled Progress in Tourism Through Circulation of Information and Knowledge. Located at Tap Lamu Naval Base.

Royal Navy's Third Fleet Sea Turtle Nursery *(บ่ออนุบาลเต่ากองเรือภาค 3)* : is at the naval base at Tap Lamu. Infant turtles from various areas on the Andaman seaboard are brought here, nursed along until strong enough to fend for themselves, then released into the sea. It is the country's most important such nursery on the Andaman coast.

PLACES OF INTEREST IN TAKUAPA DISTRICT

Takuapa Town has a very long history based on tin mining, and was in former times the most important town on the west coast of Thailand.
Accommodations of varying levels are available.



Kao Lak-Lamroo National Park *(อุทยานแห่งชาติเขาหลักลำรู)* : covers parts of Tai Meuang, Kapong, Takuapa, and Phang-nga Town (Muang in Thai) districts, and lies about 33 kms. south of Takuapa Town on Route 4.
The chief spot of interest is :

- **Kao Lak** *(เขาหลัก)* : is a mountain beside the sea with a shrine dedicated to the wizard of the mountain. Kao Lak Beach is rocky. To get there, turn left (if you are proceeding north from Phuket) at km. 56-57 of Route 4. You will spot the temple just before entering Tai Meuang district. **Accommodations** available.

Laem Pakarang (Coral Cape) *(แหลมปะการัง)* : The waves have deposited mountains of dead coral on this sandy beach, thus accounting for its name. Pine trees line the beach; perfect for camping and relaxation. Located off Petch Kasem Rd. about 5 km. south of Takuapa on the stretch running between Takuapa and Kao Lak.

Tone Chong Fah Waterfall *(น้ำตกโตนช่องฟ้า)* : A quiet, shady area, with a waterfall and stream that runs year round. Located not far from the turn-off to Laem Pakarang on the east side of Petch Kasem Rd. about 5 km. south of Takuapa.

Bang Sak Beach *(หาดบางสัก)*: is in Tambon Bang Muang. The beach is a long strip of fine white sand shaded by casuarina trees and there are **accommdations** available for a stay. To get there: Take the Petch Kasem Road (Route 4) north toward Takuapa Town. At kilometer 76-77 a road leads down to the beach about 1 km. onward.

PLACES OF INTEREST IN KAPONG DISTRICT

Lamroo Waterfall *(น้ำตกลำรู่)* : is a National Park in forested mountains. Lamroo Falls is of middle height and has 5 levels. To get there: Take the fork from Route 4090 and pass the Kapong District Office (the Ahmper) going toward Ban Lamroo about 9 kms. The falls are onward another 1 km.

Hin Lahd Waterfall *(น้ำตกหินลาด)* : lies east of the District Office about 8 kms. The falls are formed by 3 streams: the Ban Yai, Kao Mai Kaew, and the Malakor, that run together at the falls. Rocks there are spread out like paving stones. Water is crystal clear.

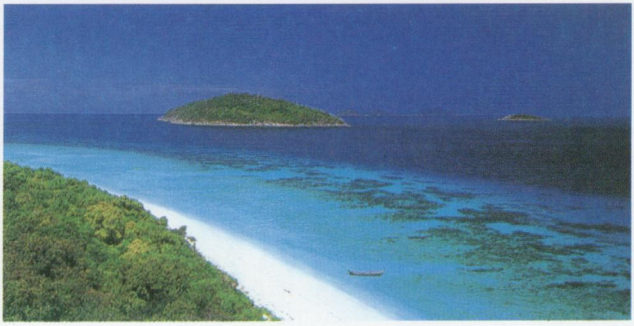
Naraya Nika Rahm Temple *(วัดนารายณิการาม)* : A temple 14 kms distant from Kapong District Office. 3 statues are there of legendary characters: Pra Narai, Pra Lak, and Nang Sida. This very old group is important because it shows the spread of Hindu culture during the shadowy period of history before the Empire of Sukothai. The statues also indicate the origins and antiquity of Hindu Takuapa, called in ancient times **Takola** (c. 1300 A.D.).

Kapong Hot Springs *(บ่อน้ำร้อนอำเภอกะปง)* : lies 8 km. distant from the Kapong District Office. The springs temperature is 65 degrees Celsius. A regular pool has been formed of the mineral water by damming up the streams.

Sang Tong Waterfall *(น้ำตกแสงทอง)* : A medium-sized 11 level yearround waterfall. Located 48 km. from Phang-nga Town. Take the road opposite Kapong Hosptial 6 km. to the falls (5 km. is paved and the final 1 km. is gravel.

PLACES OF INTEREST IN KURABURI DISTRICT

Accommodations in the form of small hotels are available in Kuraburi Town and a big resort on the way from Kuraburi to Takuapa.



Similan Islands National Park *(อุทยานแห่งชาติหมู่เกาะสิมิลัน)* : A group of 9 small islands 50 kms. off the west coast of Phang-nga in the Andaman Sea. The National Park covers an area of 80,000 rai. **Skin Diving Magazine** rated them among the ten loveliest places on Earth, because of the great natural beauty found on the islands themselves and also because of the extensive surrounding coral gardens beneath the waves. The islands are undeveloped and unspoiled; numerous species of fish, crustaceans, and other forms of sea-life abound; water clarity and diving are excellent. Similan is corrupted from the Malay Sembilan and means nine. From north to south in order the islands are: **Koh Bon, Koh Ba Ngu, Koh Similan, Koh Payoo, Koh Miang** (two islands), **Koh Pahyan, Koh Payahng** and **Koh Hu Yong.**

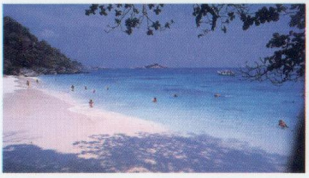
Interesting sites include :

- **Ba Ngu Island** *(เกาะบางู)* : is also called **Hua Gah Lohk** or Skull Island. Beneath the waters, a field of grass and coral appear to be growing in a deep valley. Schools of fish are everywhere.

- **Similan Island** *(เกาะสิมิลัน)* : is the largest island. It has a long curving bay, and beneath the waters coral reefs remain pristine. The beach is composed of fine grain sand. Diving to look at the fishes and corals is strongly recommended. At the island's north end are bizarrely shaped big boulders; one looks like a soldier's boot, another is shaped like a sailboat. Here also is an excellent view.

- **Hu Yong Island** *(เกาะหูยง)* : has the Similans' longest white sandy beach. From November till February sea turtles come up to lay eggs and their tracks may be seen in the sand.

- **Miang Island** *(เกาะเมี่ยง)* : is actually two islands connected and forms the second largest land mass in the group after **Koh Similan.** The National Park Office is here, and there is a fine beach where visitors can stay.



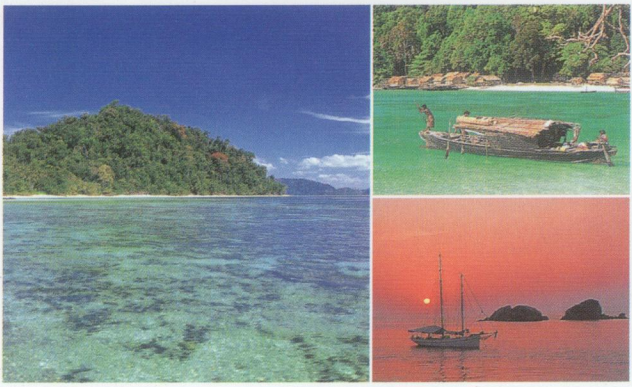
Travel to the Similans is easy from either Phang-nga or Phuket. Chartered boats leave from **Tap Lamu Pier in Tai Meuang District** of Phang-nga and take about 3 hours to reach the islands. Contact Medsine Tour Tel (076) 443276 Seatran Travel Tel. (076) 211809, 213510 Kuraburi Greenview Travel Tel. (076) 491477-8, 595068 Here is also the office of National Park located. Alternatively, trips to the Similans can be arranged in Phuket. A boat trip from **Patong Beach** takes 2 hours by Andaman Marine Tel. (076) 220665, 220184-6 Divers, however, go to the islands on boats that leave from **Patong Beach** and also take 3 hours by diving companies. Moreover, visitors can leave from **Chalong Bay** on scuba diving excursions. These leave in the evening and take about 7 hours. A typical dive trip lasts 4 nights and 3 days, and includes 10 dives. Prices range from 9,000 to 25,000 baht, depending on the level of luxury, and include food, and accommodations. The Similans are regarded as mainly deep water diving.

For those wishing to stay a short time on the Similans basic accommodations are available at the National Park Office on Koh Miang and can be reserved by contacting: the Similan Islands National Park Offices, Moo 1, Tambon Lam Kaen, Tai Meuang District, Phang-nga. Tel. (076) 959045, 421365

The best period to visit the Similans is from December through April, March being the best month, when the winds are lowest and the water clearest.

Surin Islands National Park *(อุทยานแห่งชาติหมู่เกาะสุรินทร์)* : This group of five islands close to the marine boundary between Burma and Thailand in Kuraburi has so far been little visited because of its distance from the coast and the absence of any commercial activity or permanent population other than Sea Gipsies on the islands, all of which are a protected area. The shallow channel between the two principal islands - about two meters at high tide - has one of the most remarkable panoplies of coral reef life to be found anywhere. Scuba gear is by no means necessary to get a good look at the reefs, a mere snorkel and mask is sufficient, making this a perfect destination for those who would like to have the experience of diving but haven't time for a scuba course. Accommodations at the National Park are spartan, but the modest inconvenience of roughing it will be amply rewarded by the experience supplies.

The five islands are: **Koh Surin Neua, Koh Surin Tai, Koh Ri, Koh Kai,** and **Koh Klang.** The two large islands. **Surin Neua** and **Surin Tai** (which mean, respectively, north and south) have ten bays in which coral gardens are found. The best known are :

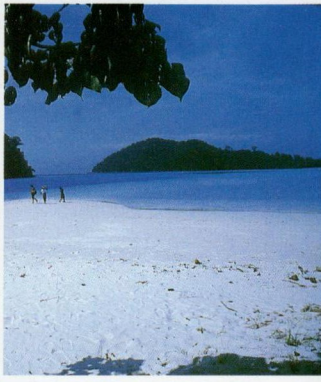


- **Mae Yai Bay** *(อ่าวแม่ยาย)* : the largest, with still waters and peaceful breezes.

- **Luk Bay** *(อ่าวลึก)* : which is on the southeast shore of Koh Surin Neua. **Luk** means deep, and this bay is so deep the water turns a dark green. In the shallows of the bay, however, are some impressive corals.

The Singh (or **Lion**) tribe of **Chao Lay** (Sea Gipsies) have a settlement of **Koh Surin Tai.** These nomadic sea people continue in this modern age a very primitive way of life; time, for example, appears to be a vague concept as none of them knows his own age, nor can count beyond the digits on his fingers. On the other hand, they are quite skilled in their own ways, able to hew an ocean-going boat using only the most basic tools, catch fish by hand, and are famous for their talents as deep divers without benefit of scuba tanks. On the fifteenth night of the third lunar month they perform a religious rite similar to the Thai festival of Loy Krathong, a propitiation ceremony in which small models of the larger **Chao Lay** craft are set adrift on the waves.

Travel to the Surin Islands can be initiated form serveral different points :



◆ From Kuraburi Pier, Ban Hin Lahd. To reach Ban Hin Lahd, take the road (located at km. 110 on the Ranong-Takuapa Highway) which splits from the main road at Ban Hin Lahd School. Travel onward to the pier about 1km. After embarking, travel to the islands takes 4-5 hours. Make a reservation for the boat trip in advance from the National Park Office tel (076) 491378, Kuraburi Greenview Travel Tel. (076) 491477-8, 595068

◆ From Tap Lamu Pier in Tai Meuang District. Travel time is 4-5 hours.

◆ From Kaper Pier in Ranong Province, or contact the Jansom Tara Hotel which has boats leaving from **Chan Damri Beach** for trips to the Surins.

N.B. One reason why the Surins are still so beautiful is that they are rather out of the way. There is no regular boat service for travellers to the islands. Boats leaving from Kuraburi Pier are suitable for group tours, and cost in the range of 8,000 to 15,000 baht to rent, depending on various factors. The situation at Tap Lamu is similar. It is sometimes possible for individuals to 'hitch' a ride or pay a reasonable fraction of the rental cost on a boat chartered by a group. This method is by no means certain and should be an option only for the adventurous who have time to spare.

Perhaps the best way for individual travellers to visit the Surins is to join a dive trip out of Phuket that includes the islands on the itinerary. This typically lasts 4 or 5 days and includes visits to the Similans, the **Richelieu Rocks** (regarded by some as the very best dive site on Thailand's west coast), and **Koh Ta Chai,** a small island south of the Surins with notably good diving. Price for such a trip is 8,000 baht and up, depending on the level of luxury, and includes meals, accommodations, equipment, and transportation. Contact one of the many dive shops in Phuket for further details.

For those wishing to stay on the Surins, basic accommodations are available at a very modest price in the National Park. For details (and information for individual travellers about joining a group to the islands) contact the Visitor's Center (076) 491378. Information about weather conditions and current numbers of visitors can sometimes be obtained from the Park Office located on the islands by calling (076) 419 028-9; phone service to these isolated islands is, however, problematic.

Weather conditions can also be investigated by dialing the **Weather Forecasting Service** in Bangkok, tel. (02) 399-4566, (02) 260-1502.

Weather on the islands is best from November to April.

Sri Phang-nga National Park *(อุทยานแห่งชาติศรีพังงา)* : lies in the districts of Kuraburi and Takua Pa, about 100 kms. from Phang-nga Town. The National Park is virtually all virgin forest, filled with wild animals, and is a great place to camp, to hike, and to botanize, Among the many waterfalls in Sri Phang-nga :

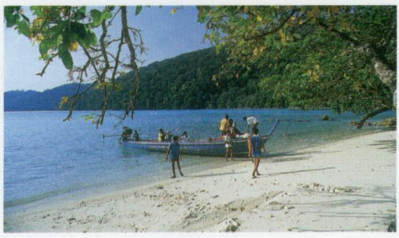
Tam Nang Waterfall *(น้ำตกตำหนัง)* : is about 4.5 kms from the National Park Office down a road; then on foot another 500 meters.

Tone Ton Teui Waterfall *(น้ำตกโตนต้นเตย)* : and a smaller called Tohn Ton Teui Noy lie about 3 hours distant from the Park Office.

Tone Sai Waterfall *(น้ำตกโตนไทร)* : lies down a road that splits off on the right near the entrance booth from the road leading into the Park. It takes about15 minutes to reach on foot.

Travel to Sri Phang-nga from Takuapa Town on the Petch Kasem Highway north toward Ranong about26 kms. At km. 756 turn right and go on another 5 kms. to the Park.

Pra Tong Island *(เกาะพระทอง)* : This is a large island that forms part of a spectacular natural harbour in Kuraburi District. Though the island is inhabited, the forests and other aspects of nature remain largely pristine. Many difficult to find animals are in the forests; there are fine, large freshwater pools, and perfect beaches.



Visitors to the island can take a regularly scheduled boat from the pier at Kuraburi; travel time is about 1 hour and 10 minutes. Accommodations of various levels are available on the island.

LOCAL FESTIVEL

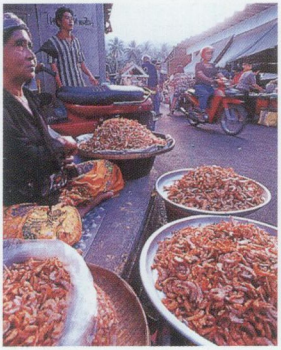
The Turtle Releasing Festival

Phang-nga Province has an annual 7-day Turtle Releasing Festival in March. Turtles raised by the Fisheries Dept. are released by festival participants into the sea at Tai Meuang.

SOUVENIRS AND LOCAL SPECIALTIES

Artificial Flowers are made by village women from rubber tree leaves. These are ingeniously conceived and handmade. They can be purchased from the Agricultural Dapt. Office in Phang-nga Town, and also from the Farm Women's Group in various districts. Call the Agricultural Dept. Office at (076) 412 019 between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm for further information.

Agricultural Products and Seafood



Phang-nga is famous for its shrimp paste, called **Kapi** *(กะปิ)*, which comes in several styles, e.g. **Kapi Koh Yao** and **Kapi Koh Panyee.** Also popular is **goong siab** *(กุ้งเสียบ)*, dried shrimp eaten with a **kapi** based spicy condiment called **nam prik** *(น้ำพริก)*. These tems can be found in local stores and markets everwhere.

Provincial Motto : Phang-nga people: open-minded, far-thinking, on the side of justice.

Plentiful ore
Homes mid the water
Caves to delight the eye
Strange Cliffs
Abundant "Jampoon" flowers
Phang-nga–replete with resources

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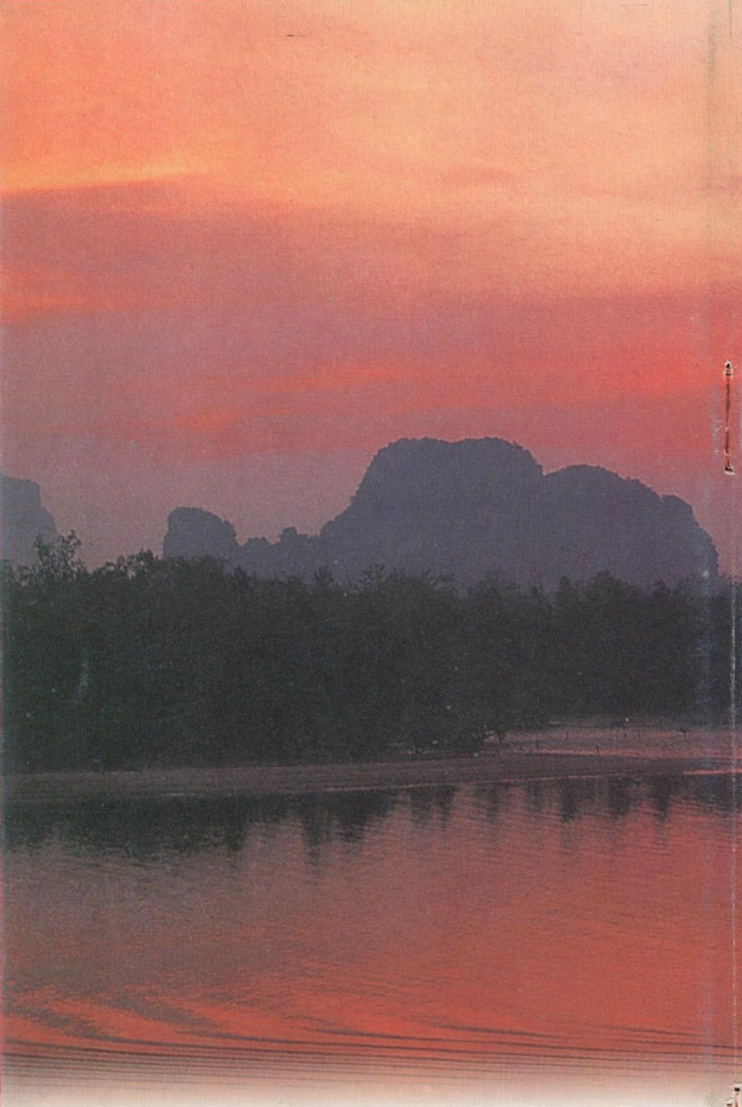
แผนที่ตัวเมืองพังงา

USEFUL THAI WORDS

THAI	ENGLISH
Ao	Bay
Had	Beach
Kao	Mountain
Koh / Mu Koh	Island/a group of Islands
Klong	Canal
Laem	Cape
Nam Tok	Waterfall
Sah	Pool
Tam	Cave
Wat	Temple



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